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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/668,161

09/24/2003

Eiichi Sakaue

243128US2RD

2804

22850

7590

12/28/2006

OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

1940 DUKE STREET

ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

EXAMINER

RUTHKOSKY, MARK

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1745

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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3 MONTHS

12/28/2006

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/668,161	Applicant(s) SAKAUE ET AL.	
	Examiner Mark Ruthkosky	Art Unit 1745	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 November 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 5-21 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>See Continuation Sheet</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Continuation of Attachment(s) 3). Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08), Paper No(s)/Mail Date :9/24/2003; 12/24/2003; 5/6/2004;6/29/2004.

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Drawings

The drawings filed on 3/24/2003 have been approved.

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election of Species 1, claims 1-4 in the reply filed on 11/3/2006 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an

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international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1-2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Kobayashi et al.

(US 6,844,094.)

The instant claims are to a fuel cell system comprising a fuel cell having an anode, a cathode and an electrolyte film put there between; a fuel supply unit supplying fuel to the anode; and a gas supply unit having a pump, the pump giving negative pressure to the cathode so as to introduce gas containing oxidant to the cathode.

Kobayashi et al. (US 6,844,094) teaches a fuel cell system comprising a fuel cell having an anode, a cathode and an electrolyte film put there between; a fuel supply unit supplying fuel to the anode; and a gas supply unit having a pump, the pump giving negative pressure to the cathode so as to introduce gas containing oxidant to the cathode (see claims 1-12, col. 5, lines 30-end; col. 7, lines 1-30, col. 8, line 51.) The pump gives negative pressure to the fuel cell at both electrodes. Further, the pump supplies positive pressure to the fuel supply unit. Thus, the claims are anticipated.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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Claims 3-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kobayashi et al. (US 6,844,094.)

Kobayashi et al. (US 6,844,094) teaches a fuel cell system comprising a fuel cell having an anode, a cathode and an electrolyte film put there between; a fuel supply unit supplying fuel to the anode; and a gas supply unit having a pump, the pump giving negative pressure to the cathode so as to introduce gas containing oxidant to the cathode (see claims 1-12, col. 5, lines 30-end; col. 7, lines 1-30, col. 8, line 51.) The pump gives negative pressure to the fuel cell at both electrodes. The reference does not teach that the pump supplies positive pressure to the fuel supply unit. The reference does, however, teach a second pump used to provide a positive pressure to the fuel supply by recirculating the hydrogen exhaust to the hydrogen supply (col. 6, line 28 to col. 7, line 30.) Based on the teachings of Kobayashi et al. (US 6,844,094), it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the pump of the hydrogen circuit at the exhaust portion of the circuit in order to create a negative pressure on the system as taught in the air supply circuit of Kobayashi et al. (US 6,844,094.) The pump will also provide a positive pressure to the fuel supply as taught in the reference by adding the exhaust gas to the supply hydrogen. The artisan would have found the claimed invention to be obvious in light of the teachings of the references.

Examiner Correspondence

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark Ruthkosky whose telephone number is 571-272-1291. The examiner can normally be reached on FLEX schedule (generally, Monday-Thursday from 9:00-

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6:30.) If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick Ryan can be reached at 571-272-1292. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free.)

Mark Ruthkosky

Primary Patent Examiner

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Mark Ruthkosky 12.20.2006